LIBRARY
Brigham Young University
RARE BOOK COLLECTION
Rare
PQ
2349
.A4
E37
1923a
BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY
3 1197 22955 4040

GUY DE MAUPASSANT

UNE VIE

A Piece of String

And Other Stories

Translated by
ALBERT M. C. McMASTER, B.A.
A. E. HENDERSON, B.A.
MME. QUESADA and Others

VOLUME I

P. F. COLLIER & SON

Copyright MCMXI
Copyright MCMXXIII
By ORSAMUS TURNER HARRIS

Printed in the
United States of America

UPB

Guy de Maupassant

P. F. COLLIER & SON COMPANY
NEW YORK

THE WORKS OF GUY DE MAUPASSANT

TEN VOLUMES

General title page in colors from a water color
by George Wright

ILLUSTRATED

P. F. COLLIER & SON COMPANY
NEW YORK

TABLE OF CONTENTS

VOLUME I

Introduction by Pol. Neveux
Une Vie
A Vagabond
The Fishing Hole
The Spasm
In the Wood
Martine
All Over
The Parrot
A Piece of String

VOLUME II

The Novel
Pierre and Jean
Father and Son
The Mask
The Penguin's Rock
A Family
Suicides
Discovery
The Accursed Bread
Beside Schopenhauer's Corpse
The Umbrella
Belhomme's Beast
The Dowry
Old Judas
The Little Cask
Boitelle
A Widow

VOLUME III

La Vie Errante
One Evening
Marroca
Fear
Allouma
Fascination
Mohammed Fripouille
The Orient
Chali
Julie Romain
On the Journey
Checkmate
The Rondoli Sisters
At Loeche
For Sale
Nos Anglais
Who Knows?
Was it a Dream?
Notes of a Traveler
Solitude

TABLE OF CONTENTS

VOLUME IV

The Horla
Miss Harriet
Little Louise Roque
The Donkey
Moiron
The Dispenser of Holy Water
The Parricide
Bertha
The Patron
The Door
A Sale
The Impolite Sex
A Wedding Gift
The Relic
The Moribund
The Gamekeeper
The Story of a Farm Girl
The Wreck
Theodule Sabot's Confession
The Wrong House
The Diamond Necklace
The Marquis de Fumerol
The Trip of the Horla

VOLUME V

Monsieur Parent
Queen Hortense
Timbuctoo
Tombstones
Mademoiselle Pearl
The Thief
Clair de Lune
Waiter a "Bock"
After
Forgiveness
Woman's Wiles
A Queer Night in Paris
That Costly Ride
Useless Beauty
The Father
My Uncle Sosthenes
The Baroness
Mother and Son
The Hand
A Tress of Hair
On the River
The Cripple
A Stroll
Alexandre
The Log
The False Gems
A Wife's Confession
Duchoux
In the Spring
Love

TABLE OF CONTENTS

VOLUME VI

Boule de Suif
Two Friends
The Lancer's Wife
The Prisoners
Two Little Soldiers
Father Milon
A Coup D'Etat
Lieutenant Laré's Marriage
The Horrible
Madame Parisse
Mademoiselle Fifi
A Duel
The Colonel's Ideas
Mother Sauvage
Epiphany
The Mustache
Madame Baptiste
The Question of Latin
A Meeting
The Blind Man
Indiscretion
A Family Affair
The Inn

VOLUME VII

Toine
Madame Husson's Rosier
The Adopted Son
A Coward
Old Mongilet
Moonlight
The First Snowfall
Sundays of a Bourgeois
A Recollection
Our Letters
The Love of Long Ago
Friend Joseph
The Effeminates
Old Amable
The Christening
The Farmer's Wife
The Devil
The Snipe
The Will
Walter Schnaff's Adventure
At Sea
Minuet
The Son
That Pig of a Morin
Saint Anthony
Lasting Love
Pierrot
A Normandy Joke
Father Matthew

TABLE OF CONTENTS

VOLUME VIII

Bel-Ami
The Wolf
Farewell
A Vendetta
An Artifice
Dreams

VOLUME IX

Sur L' Eau (or Afloat)
Simon's Papa
The Child
A Country Excursion
Rose
Rosalie Prudent
Regret
A Sister's Confession
Coco
A Dead Woman's Secret
A Humble Drama
Mademoiselle Cocotte
The Corsican Bandit
The Grave
The Englishmen of Etretat
Magnetism
A Father's Confession
A Mother of Monsters
An Uncomfortable Bed
A Portrait
The Drunkard
The Wardrobe
The Mountain Pool
A Cremation
Misti
Madame Hermet
The Magic Couch

VOLUME X

The Heritage
Yvette Samoris
The Model
My Twenty-Five Days
"The Terror"
Legend of Mont St. Michel
A New Year's Gift
Friend Patience
Abandoned
The Apparition
Clochette
The Kiss
The Legion of Honor
The Test
Found on a Drowned Man
The Orphan
The Beggar
The Rabbit

TABLE OF CONTENTS

VOLUME X—(*Continued*)

The Maison Tellier
Denis
My Wife
The Unknown
His Avenger
My Uncle Jules
The Diary of a Madman
Revenge

"De Maupassant made himself the foremost master of the art of short-story writing."—Hamilton Wright Mabie.

"De Maupassant's 'Une Vie' is to my mind the greatest novel produced in France since Victor Hugo's 'Les Misérables.'"—Leo Tolstoi.

"We can not understand the France of 1850-1890 without De Maupassant."—Paul Bourget of the French Academy.

MASTER OF THE SHORT STORY

GUY DE MAUPASSANT is the acknowledged master of the modern short story. The school of romantic realism may be said to have begun with Prosper Mérimée, was continued by Balzac, and culminated with De Maupassant. De Maupassant's ten long years of study under Flaubert gave him an insight into Flaubert's methods which, joined to his own magnificent powers of observation, enabled him at one bound to attain the highest rung of the ladder.

NEVER DULL OR TEDIOUS

His stories, never dull or tedious, are psychological studies of human passion in its comic or tragic aspects. He never moralized, commented, or passed judgment on anything. He simply painted the picture and left the reader to be the critic. This is what gives to all his stories the accent of absolute sobriety, brevity and reality.

THEY CAN NOT BE FORGOTTEN

It can not be said of De Maupassant's biting studies of life that they are "pretty stories" or that they always have a happy ending. Some of them are bitter, some are cruel, but all leave on the mind of the reader such a strong impression of life that they can not be forgotten.

THE POWER OF CONDENSED NARRATIVE

It was De Maupassant's endeavor to tell his stories with the fewest number of words possible, and concentration with him became the mania of a genius. His is an art in which every word is made to bear its share in dramatic construction, and his stories are often used as texts in courses of English composition in Colleges and High Schools because they so admirably illustrate the power of condensed narrative.

THE FRENCH AMBASSADOR'S OPINION

A similar opinion has been expressed by the French Ambassador to the United States, Monsieur Jusserand:

"De Maupassant's descriptions are very short and very telling. You see the country landscape, or the street, or the drawing-room; it stands before your eyes complete in all its details; yet there are no details. The touch of the painter is so just, the lights and shadows so true to nature, that the effect is considerable. It is the thing itself. You know you can sit in those chairs, though he mentions no chairs. In many among his predecessors and contemporaries, even in Flaubert—much more in Zola and others—descriptions are very lengthy, and when you have finished reading them you do not realize better the place, surround-

ings and atmosphere than if De Maupassant had summed up the whole in ten of his masterly lines."

BEGAN AS A CLERK

Henri René Albert Guy de Maupassant was born at Château Miromesnil, Seine Inférieure, France, August 5, 1850. He began his career as clerk in the Navy Department at Paris, and served during the Franco-Prussian War. The novelist Flaubert was his godfather, and in after years his model in the art of composition; his short stories and verses first met success in 1880. He was a prolific writer, turning out in the ten years following hundreds of short stories and six longer novels.

"Une Vie" appeared in 1883, "Bel-Ami" in 1885, "Pierre and Jean" in 1888.

From 1887 De Maupassant's health began to give way, and caused a practical suspension of work in 1890. In 1892 he became wholly insane and died at an asylum in Passy on July 6, 1893.

OFFICIALLY RECOGNIZED

In the last few years, Americans have shown a marked interest in the writings of Guy de Maupassant, and in the personality of the author himself. With Dumas, Balzac, and Hugo he has become one of the best known and best liked of French authors. Recently the Fédération de l'Alliance Française, aided by official influences in France, established in this country depots of French books to introduce to us the best in French literature. De Maupassant was selected as the greatest and best master in the delineation of modern French life.

THE HIGHEST-PAID WRITER

The Short Story, scantily relished in England, has been more popular in the United States where the great stories of Hawthorne, Poe, and Bret Harte have become household friends, but to France must be given the honor of being the land of its greatest prosperity, and De Maupassant's premiership is doubly significant in that it has been won in the field in which there has been the greatest competition. He was the highest-paid writer of his day.

Not counting his novels for the moment, his tales may be divided into three groups. First: those that deal with the Norman peasantry—and surely by his Norman peasants alone his tales will live—Second: those that deal with the "petit employé," the small shopkeeper, usually in Paris, and the petit bourgeois in general, and Third: the miscellaneous, in which the upper walks of life are represented, and the fantastic, the whimsical, the weird, and the supernatural.

In the first group, the tales dealing with the Norman peasant, De Maupassant is at his best. He knows that worthy, knows his caution, his canniness, his natural astuteness, his stinginess and general grinding sordidness. His existence has a gay side, but more often it is one of sorrow and misery. "Une Vie" is a capital example of this, showing with what tenderness De Maupassant handles a story of selfishness and sorrow.

PHOTOGRAPHIC REALITY

In "Miss Harriet" we catch glimpses of Norman life, in the country that De Maupassant knew so well, that are almost photographic in their clearness.

In the second group, De Maupassant evidently knows a great deal about the army of clerks who work under the Government, the petit bourgeois in general. A good ex-

ample is to be found in "Pierre and Jean," probably the best of De Maupassant's novels, a psychological story which illustrates alike De Maupassant's intense vividness and his art in analyzing complex emotions.

The third group includes such weird tales as "Chali," "The Rondoli Sisters," "The Devil," "The Vagabond," and that vampire tale of "Le Horla" which gained great notoriety through its supposed bearing on the attack of general paralysis which so tragically closed the great author's career.

FASCINATING READING

Take up any volume, read a novel or short story, and at once in reading you seem to be transported into the scenes the author is describing—it is Spring, we are in Paris, we walk along the Rue de Rivoli or stop, held for the moment by some refrain from a Café Chantant in the Champs Elysées—we cross one of the innumerable bridges; we are on the magical "other side" of the Seine with its meshwork of narrow streets, overhanging houses, romantic open-air cafés, with illimitable possibilities of humor, pathos, comedy, and tragedy.

For the lover of a short story, for the person who likes in a half hour or in a couple of hours to finish a story, De Maupassant has no equal.

APPRECIATIONS OF DE MAUPASSANT

"De Maupassant knew how to find 'the unknown quantity in the smallest thing.' Everything which De Maupassant wrote is interesting, it is more exclusively and merely interesting than the work of any writer of fiction who has been called great."—Arthur Symons.

"He was a writer of great dramatic power. Very few writers have come up to De Maupassant's level in the

short tales, in which not a word is wasted, not an incident unnecessary, not a line written in excess. The characters live. In a few pages we have learned to know them, to sympathize with them, to remember them long afterward. De Maupassant belongs to the naturalistic school; he sees the very ugly side of life, but he also sees the brighter. His characters are not all despicable, not all mean and vile. When he depicts fallen men, he succeeds in awakening pity for the victim . . . happily what is good in his work will not be buried in his bones."—GEORGE SAINTSBURY, in the *Nation.*

"De Maupassant achieved the miracle of a fresh tone. He was a man of genius to whom short cuts were disclosed in the watches of the night."—HENRY JAMES.

"De Maupassant made himself the foremost master of the art of short-story writing in a group of writers who seemed to know instinctively the limitations and resources of a literary form which exacts the nicest perceptions and the surest skill."—HAMILTON WRIGHT MABIE.

"De Maupassant was the painter of humanity in words. Without hatred, without love, without anger, without pity, merciless as fire, immutable as fate, he holds a mirror up to life without attempting judgment."—ANATOLE FRANCE.

"Just as it is impossible for us to grasp the Rome of the Cæsars without the aid of Petronius, we can not understand the France of 1850-1890 without De Maupassant."—PAUL BOURGET.

"De Maupassant's 'Une Vie' is to my mind the greatest novel produced in France since Victor Hugo's 'Les Misérables.' . . . I love his sincerity, his power, and the beauty of his style."—LEO TOLSTOI.

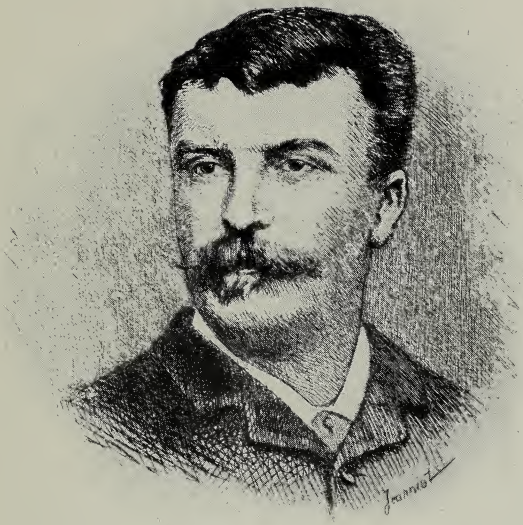
" 'Bel-Ami,' discussed and criticized as it has been, is really a satire, an indignant outburst against the corruption of society, which in the story enables the ex-soldier, devoid of conscience, honor, even of the commonest regard for others, to gain wealth and rank."

"The terribly graphic description of the consumptive journalist's demise, his frantic clinging to life, and his refusal to credit the slow and merciless approach of death, will make the reader reconsider former hasty judgments and feel that beneath the triumph of evil which calls forth De Maupassant's satiric anger, there lies the substratum on which all his work is founded. The persistent, ceaseless questioning of a soul unable to reconcile or explain the contradiction between love in life and inevitable death."

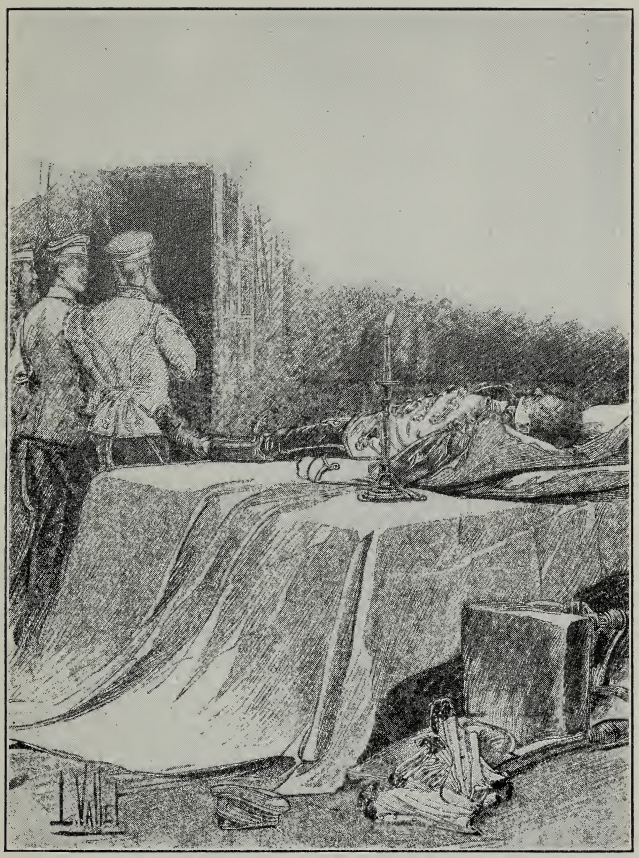
" 'Une Vie' is a romance of the best type, and in my judgment the greatest that has been produced by any French writer since Victor Hugo penned 'Les Misérables.' Passing over the force and directness of the narrative, I am struck by the intensity, the grace, and the insight with which the writer treats the new aspects of human nature which he finds in the life he describes."—TOLSTOI.

"De Maupassant's dramatic instinct was supremely powerful. He seems to select unerringly the one thing in which the soul of the scene is prisoned, and, making that his keynote, gives a picture in words which haunt the memory like a strain of music.

"He had the genius of condensation and the reserve which is innate in power, and to his reader could convey as much in a paragraph as could be expressed in a page by many of his predecessors and contemporaries, Flaubert not excepted."—ROBERT ARNOT.

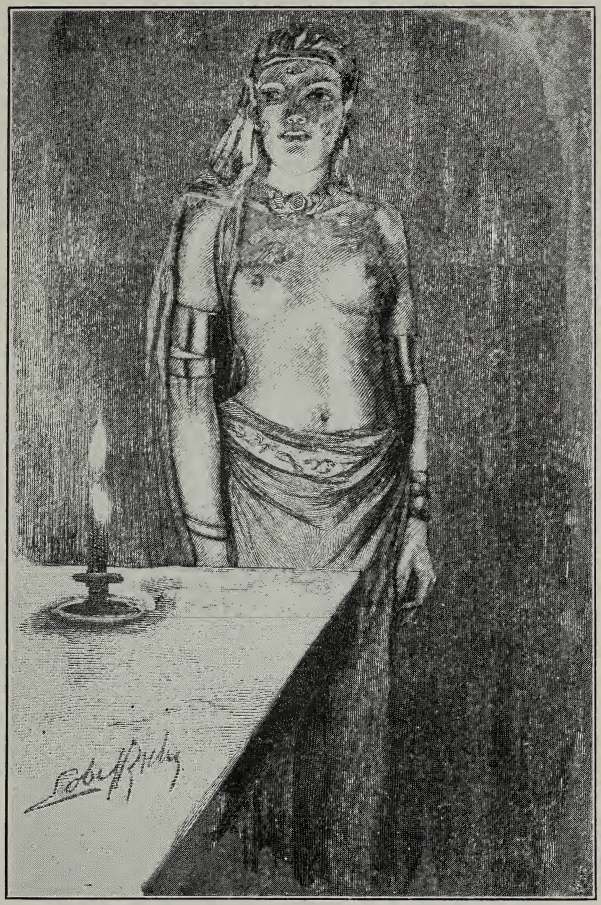


Guy de Maupassant.



"The table, which had been cleared immediately, now served as a bed on which to lay out the lieutenant."

—Mademoiselle Fifi, p. 15.



"She admired herself conscientiously, standing before the glass door in which she followed her own movements with profound and serious attention."

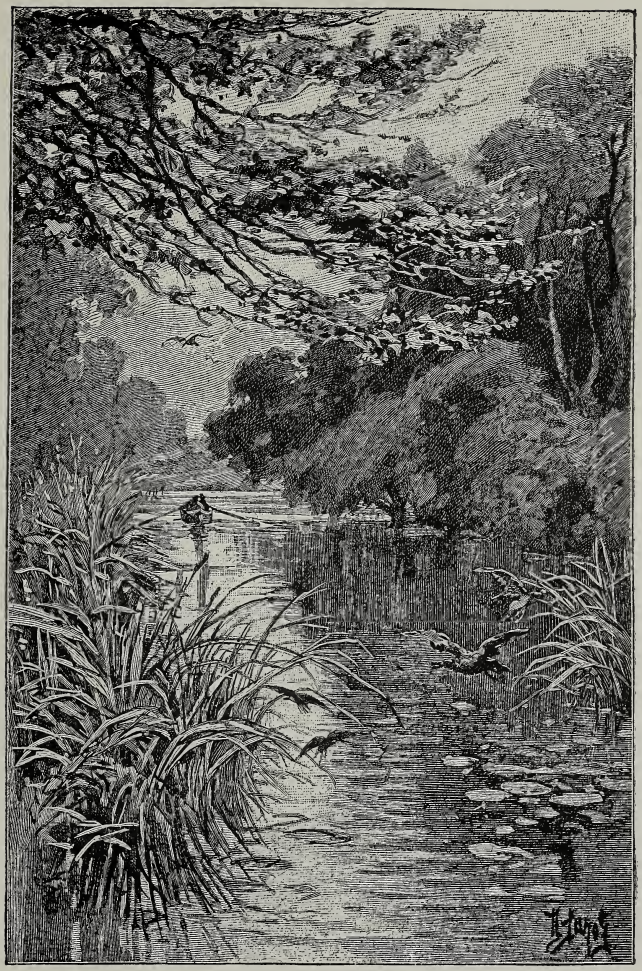
—*Allouma, p. 18.*

"She lived among those infamous surroundings with a quiet, tranquil ease."

—Yvette Samoris, p. 2.

"They were finishing their drinks when I said to them: 'You are full; fuller than this barrel.'"

—*A Sale, p. 3.*



"It winds along, pursuing its course unperceived amid the calm, lonely, and magnificent country, and looks like a peaceful lake."

—*Sur L'Eau, p. 75.*

"As they entered the white gateway of the husband's farm, forty shots resounded."

—*A Normandy Joke, p. 1.*

"Celeste, suddenly pale, quickly stepped forward and forcibly poured a spoonful down the child's open mouth."

—The Child, p. 4.

UNE VIE

Or, The History of a Heart

CHAPTER I

THE HOME BY THE SEA

THE weather was most distressing. It had rained all night. The roaring of the overflowing gutters filled the deserted streets, in which the houses, like sponges, absorbed the humidity, which penetrating to the interior, made the walls sweat from cellar to garret. Jeanne had left the convent the day before, free for all time, ready to seize all the joys of life, of which she had dreamed so long. She was afraid her father would not set out for the new home in bad weather, and for the hundredth time since daybreak she examined the horizon. Then she noticed that she had omitted to put her calendar in her travelling bag. She took from the wall the little card which bore in golden figures the date of the current year, 1819. Then she marked with a pencil the first four columns, drawing a line through the name of each saint up to the 2d of May, the day that she left the convent. A voice outside the door called "Jeannette." Jeanne replied, "Come in, papa." And her father entered. Baron Simon-Jacques Le Perthuis des Vauds was a

gentleman of the last century, eccentric and good. An enthusiastic disciple of Jean Jacques Rousseau, he had the tenderness of a lover for nature, in the fields, in the woods and in the animals. Of aristocratic birth, he hated instinctively the year 1793, but being a philosopher by temperament and liberal by education, he execrated tyranny with an inoffensive and declamatory hatred. His great strength and his great weakness was his kind-heartedness, which had not arms enough to caress, to give, to embrace; the benevolence of a god, that gave freely, without questioning; in a word, a kindness of inertia that became almost a vice. A man of theory, he thought out a plan of education for his daughter, to the end that she might become happy, good, upright and gentle. She had lived at home until the age of twelve, when, despite the tears of her mother, she was placed in the Convent of the Sacred Heart. He had kept her severely secluded, cloistered, in ignorance of the secrets of life. He wished the Sisters to restore her to him pure at seventeen years of age, so that he might imbue her mind with a sort of rational poetry, and by means of the fields. in the midst of the fruitful earth, unfold her soul, enlighten her ignorance through the aspect of love in nature, through the simple tenderness of the animals, through the placid laws of existence. She was leaving the convent radiant, full of the joy of life, ready for all the happiness, all the charming incidents which her mind had pictured in her idle hours and in the long, quiet nights. She was like a portrait by Veronese with her fair, glossy hair, which seemed to cast a radiance on her skin, a skin with the faintest tinge of pink, softened by a light velvety down

which could be perceived when the sun kissed her cheek. Her eyes were an opaque blue, like those of Dutch porcelain figures. She had a tiny mole on her left nostril and another on the right of her chin. She was tall, well developed, with willowy figure. Her clear voice sounded at times a little too sharp, but her frank, sincere laugh spread joy around her. Often, with a familiar gesture, she would raise her hands to her temples as if to arrange her hair.

She ran to her father and embraced him warmly. "Well, are we going to start?" she said. He smiled, shook his head and said, pointing toward the window, "How can we travel in such weather?" But she implored in a cajoling and tender manner, "Oh, papa, do let us start. It will clear up in the afternoon." "But your mother will never consent to it." "Yes, I promise you that she will, I will arrange that." "If you succeed in persuading your mother, I am perfectly willing." In a few moments she returned from her mother's room, shouting in a voice that could be heard all through the house, "Papa, papa, mamma is willing. Have the horses harnessed." The rain was not abating; one might almost have said that it was raining harder when the carriage drove up to the door. Jeanne was ready to step in when the baroness came downstairs, supported on one side by her husband and on the other by a tall housemaid, strong and strapping as a boy. She was a Norman woman of the country of Caux, who looked at least twenty, although she was but eighteen at the most. She was treated by the family as a second daughter, for she was Jeanne's foster sister. Her name was Rosalie, and her chief duty lay in guiding the steps of her mistress, who had

grown enormous in the last few years and also had an affection of the heart, which kept her complaining continually. The baroness, gasping from over-exertion, finally reached the doorstep of the old residence, looked at the court where the water was streaming and remarked: "It really is not wise." Her husband, always pleasant, replied: "It was you who desired it, Madame Adelaide." He always preceded her pompous name of Adelaide with the title madame with an air of half respectful mockery. Madame mounted with difficulty into the carriage, causing all the springs to bend. The baron sat beside her, while Jeanne and Rosalie were seated opposite, with their backs to the horses. Ludivine, the cook, brought a heap of wraps to put over their knees and two baskets, which were placed under the seats; then she climbed on the box beside Father Simon, wrapping herself in a great rug which covered her completely. The porter and his wife came to bid them good-by as they closed the carriage door, taking the last orders about the trunks, which were to follow in a wagon. So they started. Father Simon, the coachman, with head bowed and back bent in the pouring rain, was completely covered by his box coat with its triple cape. The howling storm beat upon the carriage windows and inundated the highway.

They drove rapidly to the wharf and continued alongside the line of tall-masted vessels until they reached the boulevard of Mont Riboudet. Then they crossed the meadows, where from time to time a drowned willow, its branches drooping limply, could be faintly distinguished through the mist of rain.

No one spoke. Their minds themselves seemed to be saturated with moisture like the earth.

The baroness leaned her head against the cushions and closed her eyes. The baron looked out with mournful eyes at the monotonous and drenched landscape. Rosalie, with a parcel on her knee, was dreaming in the dull reverie of a peasant. But Jeanne, under this downpour, felt herself revive like a plant that has been shut up and has just been restored to the air, and so great was her joy that, like foliage, it sheltered her heart from sadness. Although she did not speak, she longed to burst out singing, to reach out her hands to catch the rain that she might drink it. She enjoyed to the full being carried along rapidly by the horses, enjoyed gazing at the desolate landscape and feeling herself under shelter amid this general inundation. Beneath the pelting rain the gleaming backs of the two horses emitted a warm steam.

Little by little the baroness fell asleep, and presently began to snore sonorously. Her husband leaned over and placed in her hands a little leather pocketbook.

This awakened her, and she looked at the pocketbook with the stupid, sleepy look of one suddenly aroused. It fell off her lap and sprang open and gold and bank bills were scattered on the floor of the carriage. This roused her completely, and Jeanne gave vent to her mirth in a merry peal of girlish laughter.

The baron picked up the money and placed it on her knees. "This, my dear," he said, "is all that is left of my farm at Eletot. I have sold it—so as to

be able to repair the 'Poplars,' where we shall often live in the future."

She counted six thousand four hundred francs and quietly put them in her pocket. This was the ninth of thirty-one farms that they had inherited which they had sold in this way. Nevertheless they still possessed about twenty thousand livres income annually in land rentals, which, with proper care, would have yielded about thirty thousand francs a year.

Living simply as they did, this income would have sufficed had there not been a bottomless hole always open in their house—kind-hearted generosity. It dried up the money in their hands as the sun dries the water in marshes. It flowed, fled, disappeared. How? No one knew. Frequently one would say to the other, "I don't know how it happens, but I have spent one hundred francs to-day, and I have bought nothing of any consequence." This faculty of giving was, however, one of the greatest pleasures of their life, and they all agreed on this point in a superb and touching manner.

Jeanne asked her father, "Is it beautiful now, my castle?" The baron replied, "You shall see, my little girl."

The storm began to abate. The vault of clouds seemed to rise and heighten and suddenly, through a rift, a long ray of sunshine fell upon the fields, and presently the clouds separated, showing the blue firmament, and then, like the tearing of a veil, the opening grew larger and the beautiful azure sky, clear and fathomless, spread over the world. A fresh and gentle breeze passed over the earth like a happy sigh, and as they passed beside gardens or

woods they heard occasionally the bright chirp of a bird as he dried his wings.

Evening was approaching. Everyone in the carriage was asleep except Jeanne. They stopped to rest and feed the horses. The sun had set. In the distance bells were heard. They passed a little village as the inhabitants were lighting their lamps, and the sky became also illuminated by myriads of stars. Suddenly they saw behind a hill, through the branches of the fir trees, the moon rising, red and full as if it were torpid with sleep.

The air was so soft that the windows were not closed. Jeanne, exhausted with dreams and happy visions, was now asleep. Finally they stopped. Some men and women were standing before the carriage door with lanterns in their hands. They had arrived. Jeanne, suddenly awakened, was the first to jump out. Her father and Rosalie had practically to carry the baroness, who was groaning and continually repeating in a weak little voice, "Oh, my God, my poor children!" She refused all offers of refreshment, but went to bed and immediately fell asleep. Jeanne and her father, the baron, took supper together. They were in perfect sympathy with each other. Later, seized with a childish joy, they started on a tour of inspection through the restored manor. It was one of those high and vast Norman residences that comprise both farmhouse and castle, built of white stone which had turned gray, large enough to contain a whole race of people.

An immense hall divided the house from front to rear and a staircase went up at either side of the entrance, meeting in a bridge on the first floor. The huge drawing-room was on the ground floor to the

right and was hung with tapestries representing birds and foliage. All the furniture was covered with fine needlework tapestry illustrating La Fontaine's fables, and Jeanne was delighted at finding a chair she had loved as a child, which pictured the story of "The Fox and the Stork."

Beside the drawin-room were the library, full of old books, and two unused rooms; at the left was the dining-room, the laundry, the kitchen, etc.

A corridor divided the whole first floor, the doors of ten rooms opening into it. At the end, on the right, was Jeanne's room. She and her father went in. He had had it all newly done over, using the furniture and draperies that had been in the storeroom.

There were some very old Flemish tapestries, with their peculiar looking figures. At sight of her bed, the young girl uttered a scream of joy. Four large birds carved in oak, black from age and highly polished, bore up the bed and seemed to be its protectors. On the sides were carved two wide garlands of flowers and fruit, and four finely fluted columns, terminating in Corinthian capitals, supported a cornice of cupids with roses intertwined. The tester and the coverlet were of antique blue silk, embroidered in gold fleur de lys. When Jeanne had sufficiently admired it, she lifted up the candle to examine the tapestries and the allegories they represented. They were mostly conventional subjects, but the last hanging represented a drama. Near a rabbit, which was still nibbling, a young man lay stretched out, apparently dead. A young girl, gazing at him, was plunging a sword into her bosom, and the fruit of the tree had turned black. Jeanne gave

up trying to divine the meaning underlying this picture, when she saw in the corner a tiny little animal which the rabbit, had he lived, could have swallowed like a blade of grass; and yet it was a lion. Then she recognized the story of "Pyramus and Thisbe," and though she smiled at the simplicity of the design, she felt happy to have in her room this love adventure which would continually speak to her of her cherished hopes, and every night this legendary love would hover about her dreams.

It struck eleven and the baron kissed Jeanne goodnight and retired to his room. Before retiring, Jeanne cast a last glance round her room and then regretfully extinguished the candle. Through her window she could see the bright moonlight bathing the trees and the wonderful landscape. Presently she arose, opened a window and looked out. The night was so clear that one could see as plainly as by daylight. She looked across the park with its two long avenues of very tall poplars that gave its name to the château and separated it from the two farms that belonged to it, one occupied by the Couillard family, the other by the Martins. Beyond the enclosure stretched a long, uncultivated plain, thickly overgrown with rushes, where the breeze whistled day and night. The land ended abruptly in a steep white cliff three hundred feet high, with its base in the ocean waves.

Jeanne looked out over the long, undulating surface that seemed to slumber beneath the heavens. All the fragrance of the earth was in the night air. The odor of jasmine rose from the lower windows, and light whiffs of briny air and of seaweed were wafted from the ocean.

Merely to breathe was enough for Jeanne, and the restful calm of the country was like a soothing bath. She felt as though her heart was expanding and she began dreaming of love. What was it? She did not know. She only knew that she would adore *him* with all her soul and that he would cherish her with all his strength. They would walk hand in hand on nights like this, hearing the beating of their hearts, mingling their love with the sweet simplicity of the summer nights in such close communion of thought that by the sole power of their tenderness they would easily penetrate each other's most secret thoughts. This would continue forever in the calm of an enduring affection. It seemed to her that she felt *him* there beside her. And an unusual sensation came over her. She remained long musing thus, when suddenly she thought she heard a footstep behind the house. "If it were *he*." But it passed on and she felt as if she had been deceived. The air became cooler. The day broke. Slowly bursting aside the gleaming clouds, touching with fire the trees, the plains, the ocean, all the horizon, the great flaming orb of the sun appeared.

Jeanne felt herself becoming mad with happiness. A delirious joy, an infinite tenderness at the splendor of nature overcame her fluttering heart. It was *her* sun, *her* dawn! The beginning of *her* life! Thoroughly fatigued at last, she flung herself down and slept till her father called her at eight o'clock. He walked into the room and proposed to show her the improvements of the castle, of *her* castle. The road, called the parish road, conecting the farms, joined the high road between Havre and Fécamp, a mile and a half further on.

Jeanne and the baron inspected everything and returned home for breakfast. When the meal was over, as the baroness had decided that she would rest, the baron proposed to Jeanne that they should go down to Yport. They started, and passing through the hamlet of Etouvent, where the poplars were, and going through the wooded slope by a winding valley leading down to the sea, they presently perceived the village of Yport. Women sat in their doorways mending linen; brown fish-nets were hanging against the doors of the huts, where an entire family lived in one room. It was a typical little French fishing village, with all its concomitant odors. To Jeanne it was all like a scene in a play. On turning a corner they saw before them the limitless blue ocean. They bought a brill from a fisherman and another sailor offered to take them out sailing, repeating his name, "Lastique, Joséphin Lastique," several times, that they might not forget it, and the baron promised to remember. They walked home, chattering like two children, carrying the big fish between them, Jeanne having pushed her father's walking cane through its gills.

CHAPTER II

HAPPY DAYS

A delightful life commenced for Jeanne, a life in the open air. She wandered along the roads, or into the little winding valleys, their sides covered with a fleece of gorse blossoms, the strong sweet odor of which intoxicated her like the bouquet of wine, while the distant sound of the waves rolling on the beach seemed like a billow rocking her spirit.

A love of solitude came upon her in the sweet freshness of this landscape and in the calm of the rounded horizon, and she would remain sitting so long on the hill tops that the wild rabbits would bound by her feet.

She planted memories everywhere, as seeds are cast upon the earth, memories whose roots hold till death. It seemed to Jeanne that she was casting a little of her heart into every fold of these valleys. She became infatuated with sea bathing. When she was well out from shore, she would float on her back, her arms crossed, her eyes lost in the profound blue of the sky which was cleft by the flight of a swallow, or the white silhouette of a seabird.

After these excursions she invariably came back to the castle pale with hunger, but light, alert, a smile on her lips and her eyes sparkling with happiness.

The baron on his part was planning great agricultural enterprises. Occasionally, also, he went out to sea with the sailors of Yport. On several occasions he went fishing for mackerel and, again, by moonlight, he would haul in the nets laid the night before. He loved to hear the masts creak, to breathe in the fresh and whistling gusts of wind that arose during the night; and after having tacked a long time to find the buoys, guiding himself by a peak of rocks, the roof of a belfry or the Fécamp lighthouse, he delighted to remain motionless beneath the first gleams of the rising sun which made the slimy backs of the large fan-shaped rays and the fat bellies of the turbots glisten on the deck of the boat.

At each meal he gave an enthusiastic account of his expeditions, and the baroness in her turn told how many times she had walked down the main avenue of poplars.

As she had been advised to take exercise she made a business of walking, beginning as soon as the air grew warm. Leaning upon Rosalie's arm and dragging her left foot, which was rather heavier than the right, she wandered interminably up and down from the house to the edge of the wood, sitting down for five minutes at either end. The walking was resumed in the afternoon. A physician, consulted ten years before, had spoken of hypertrophy because she had suffered from suffocation. Ever since, this word had been used to describe the ailment of the baroness. The baron would say "my wife's hypertrophy" and Jeanne "mamma's hypertrophy" as they would have spoken of her hat, her dress, or her umbrella. She had been very pretty in her youth and slim as a reed. Now she had grown

older, stouter, but she still remained poetical, having always retained the impression of "Corinne," which she had read as a girl. She read all the sentimental love stories it was possible to collect, and her thoughts wandered among tender adventures in which she always figured as the heroine. Her new home was infinitely pleasing to her because it formed such a beautiful framework for the romance of her soul, the surrounding woods, the waste land, and the proximity of the ocean recalling to her mind the novels of Sir Walter Scott, which she had been devouring for some months. On rainy days she remained shut up in her room, sending Rosalie in a special manner for the drawer containing her "souvenirs," which meant to the baroness all her old private and family letters.

Occasionally, Jeanne replaced Rosalie in the walks with her mother, and she listened eagerly to the tales of the latter's childhood. The young girl saw herself in all these romantic stories, and was astonished at the similarity of ideas and desires; each heart imagines itself to have been the first to tremble at those very sensations that awakened the hearts of the first beings, and that will awaken the hearts of the last.

One afternoon as the baroness and Jeanne were resting on the beach at the end of the walk, a stout priest who was moving in their direction greeted them with a bow, while still at a distance. He bowed when within three feet and, assuming a smiling air, cried: "Well, Madame la Baronne, how are you?" It was the village priest. The baroness seldom went to church, though she liked priests, from a sort of religious instinct peculiar to women. She

had, in fact, entirely forgotten the Abbé Picot, her priest, and blushed as she saw him. She made apologies for not having prepared for his visit, but the good man was not at all embarrassed. He looked at Jeanne, complimented her on her appearance and sat down, placing his three-cornered hat on his knees. He was very stout, very red, and perspired profusely. He drew from his pocket every moment an enormous checked handkerchief and passed it over his face and neck, but hardly was the task completed when necessity forced him to repeat the process. He was a typical country priest, talkative and kindly.

Presently the baron appeared. He was very friendly to the abbé and invited him to dinner. The priest was well versed in the art of being pleasant, thanks to the unconscious astuteness which the guiding of souls gives to the most mediocre of men who are called by the chance of events to exercise a power over their fellows. Toward dessert he became quite merry, with the gaiety that follows a pleasant meal, and as if struck by an idea he said: "I have a new parishioner whom I must present to you, Monsieur le Vicomte de Lamare." The baroness, who was at home in heraldry, inquired if he was of the family of Lamares of Eure. The priest answered, "Yes, madame, he is the son of Vicomte Jean de Lamare, who died last year." After this, the baroness, who loved the nobility above all other things, inquired the history of the young vicomte. He had paid his father's debts, sold the family castle, made his home on one of the three farms which he owned in the town of Etouvent. These estates brought him in an income of five or

six thousand livres. The vicomte was economical and lived in this modest manner for two or three years, so that he might save enough to cut a figure in society, and to marry advantageously, without contracting debts or mortgaging his farms. The priest added, "He is a very charming young man, so steady and quiet, though there is very little to amuse him in the country." The baron said, "Bring him in to see us, Monsieur l'Abbé, it will be a distraction for him occasionally." After the coffee the baron and the priest took a turn about the grounds and then returned to say good-night to the ladies.

The maid replied as usual: "Nothing, madame"; but her voice was weak and trembling.

Jeanne's thoughts were on something else, when she noticed that the girl was not moving about the room. She called: "Rosalie!" Still no sound. Then, thinking she might have left the room, she cried in a louder tone: "Rosalie!" and she was reaching out her arm to ring the bell, when a deep moan close beside her made her start up with a shudder.

The little servant, her face livid, her eyes haggard, was seated on the floor, her legs stretched out, and her back leaning against the bed. Jeanne sprang toward her. "What is the matter with you—what is the matter?" she asked.

The girl did not reply, did not move. She stared vacantly at her mistress and gasped as though she were in terrible pain. Then, suddenly, she slid down on her back at full length, clenching her teeth to smother a cry of anguish.

Jeanne suddenly understood, and almost distracted, she ran to the head of the stairs, crying: "Julien, Julien!"

"What do you want?" he replied from below.

She hardly knew how to tell him. "It is Rosalie, who——"

Julien rushed upstairs two steps at a time, and going abruptly into the room, he found the poor girl had just been delivered of a child. He looked round with a wicked look on his face, and pushing his terrified wife out of the room, exclaimed: "This is none of your affair. Go away. Send me Ludivine and old Simon."

Jeanne, trembling, descended to the kitchen, and

then, not daring to go upstairs again, she went into the drawing-room, in which there had been no fire since her parents left, and anxiously awaited news.

She presently saw the man-servant running out of the house. Five minutes later he returned with Widow Dentu, the nurse of the district.

Then there was a great commotion on the stairs as though they were carrying a wounded person, and Julien came in and told Jeanne that she might go back to her room.

She trembled as if she had witnessed some terrible accident. She sat down again before the fire, and asked: "How is she?"

Julien, preoccupied and nervous, was pacing up and down the room. He seemed to be getting angry, and did not reply at first. Then he stopped and said: "What do you intend to do with this girl?"

She did not understand, and looked at her husband. "Why, what do you mean? I do not know."

Then suddenly flying into a rage, he exclaimed: "We cannot keep a bastard in the house."

Jeanne was very much bewildered, and said at the end of a long silence: "But, my friend, perhaps we could put it out to nurse?"

He cut her short: "And who will pay the bill? You will, no doubt."

She reflected for some time, trying to find some way out of the difficulty; at length she said: "Why, the father will take care of it, of the child; and if he marries Rosalie, there will be no more difficulty."

Julien, as though his patience were exhausted, replied furiously: "The father!—the father!—do you

know him—the father? No, is it not so? Well then——?"

Jeanne, much affected, became excited: "But you certainly would not let the girl go away like that. It would be cowardly! We will inquire the name of the man, and we will go and find him, and he will have to explain matters."

Julien had calmed down and resumed his pacing up and down. "My dear," he said, "she will not tell the name of the man; she will not tell you any more than she will tell me—and, if he does not want her? . . . We cannot, however, keep a woman and her illegitimate child under our roof, don't you understand?"

Jeanne, persistent, replied: "Then he must be a wretch, this man. But we must certainly find out who it is, and then he will have us to deal with."

Julien colored, became annoyed again, and said: "But—meanwhile——?"

She did not know what course to take, and asked: "What do you propose?"

"Oh, I? That's very simple. I would give her some money and send her to the devil with her brat."

The young wife, indignant, was disgusted with him. "That shall never be," she said. "She is my foster-sister, that girl; we grew up together. She has made a mistake, so much the worse; but I will not cast her out of doors on that account; and, if it is necessary, I will bring up the child."

Then Julien's wrath exploded: "And we should earn a fine reputation, we, with our name and our position! And they would say of us everywhere that we were protecting vice, harboring beggars;

and decent people would never set their foot inside our doors. What are you thinking of? You must be crazy!"

She had remained quite calm. "I shall never cast off Rosalie; and if you do not wish her to stay, my mother will take her; and we shall surely succeed in finding out the name of the father of the child."

He left the room in exasperation, banging the door after him and exclaiming: "What stupid ideas women have!"

In the afternoon Jeanne went up to see the patient. The little maid, watched over by Widow Dentu, was lying still in her bed, her eyes wide open, while the nurse held the new-born babe in her arms.

As soon as Rosalie perceived her mistress, she began to sob, hiding her face in the covers and shaking with her sorrow. Jeanne wanted to kiss her, but she avoided it by keeping her face covered. But the nurse interfered, and drawing away the sheet, uncovered her face, and she let Jeanne kiss her, weeping still, but more quietly.

A meagre fire was burning in the grate; the room was cold; the child was crying. Jeanne did not dare to speak of the little one, for fear of another attack, and she took her maid's hand as she said mechanically: "It will not matter, it will not matter." The poor girl glanced furtively at the nurse, and trembled as the infant cried, and the remembrance of her sorrow came to her mind occasionally in a convulsive sob, while suppressed tears choked her.

Jeanne kissed her again, and murmured softly in her ear: "We will take good care of it, never fear, my girl." Then as she was beginning to cry again, Jeanne made her escape.

She came to see her every day, and each time Rosalie burst into tears at the sight of her mistress.

The child was put out to nurse at a neighbor's.

Julien, however, hardly spoke to his wife, as though he had nourished anger against her ever since she refused to send away the maid. He referred to the subject one day, but Jeanne took from her pocket a letter from the baroness asking them to send the girl to them at once if they would not keep her at the "Poplars." Julien, furious, cried: "Your mother is as foolish as you are!" but he did not insist any more.

Two weeks later the patient was able to get up and take up her work again.

One morning, Jeanne made her sit down and, taking her hands and looking steadfastly at her, she said:

"See here, my girl, tell me everything."

Rosalie began to tremble, and faltered:

"What, madame?"

"Whose is it, this child?"

The little maid was overcome with confusion, and she sought wildly to withdraw her hands so as to hide her face. But Jeanne kissed her in spite of herself, and consoled her, saying: "It is a misfortune, but cannot be helped, my girl. You were weak, but that happens to many others. If the father marries you, no one will think of it again."

Rosalie sighed as if she were suffering, and from time to time made an effort to disengage herself and run away.

Jeanne resumed: "I understand perfectly that you are ashamed; but you see that I am not angry, that

I speak kindly to you. If I ask you the name of the man it is for your own good, for I feel from your grief that he has deserted you, and because I wish to prevent that. Julien will go and look for him, you see, and we will oblige him to marry you; and as we will employ you both, we will oblige him also to make you happy."

This time Rosalie gave such a jerk that she snatched her hands away from her mistress and ran off as if she were mad.

That evening at dinner Jeanne said to Julien: "I tried to persuade Rosalie to tell me the name of her betrayer. I did not suceeed. You try to find out so that we can compel this miserable man to marry her."

But Julien became angry: "Oh! you know I do not wish to hear anything about it. You wish to keep this girl. Keep her, but do not bother me about her."

Since the girl's illness he appeared to be more irritable than ever; and he had got into the way of never speaking to his wife without shouting as if he were in a rage, while she, on the contrary, would lower her voice, be gentle and conciliating, to avoid all argument; but she often wept at night after she went to bed.

In spite of his constant irritability, her husband had become more affectionate than customary since their return.

Rosalie was soon quite well and less sad, although she appeared terrified, pursued by some unknown fear, and she ran away twice when Jeanne tried to question her again.

Julien all at once became more amiable, and the

young wife, clinging to vain hopes, also became more cheerful. The thaw had not yet set in and a hard, smooth, glittering covering of snow extended over the landscape. Neither men nor animals were to be seen; only the chimneys of the cottages gave evidence of life in the smoke that ascended from them into the icy air.

One evening the thermometer fell still lower, and Julien, shivering as he left the table—for the dining-room was never properly heated, he was so economical with the wood—rubbed his hands, murmuring: "It will be warmer to-night, won't it, my dear?" He laughed with his jolly laugh of former days, and Jeanne threw her arms around his neck: "I do not feel well, dear; perhaps I shall be better to-morrow."

"As you wish, my dear. If you are ill you must take care of yourself." And they began to talk of other things.

She retired early. Julien, for a wonder, had a fire lighted in her room. As soon as he saw that it was burning brightly, he kissed his wife on the forehead and left the room.

The whole house seemed to be penetrated by the cold; the very walls seemed to be shivering, and Jeanne shivered in her bed. Twice she got up to put fresh logs on the fire and to look for dresses, skirts, and other garments which she piled on the bed. Nothing seemed to warm her; her feet were numbed and her lower limbs seemed to tingle, making her excessively nervous and restless.

Then her teeth began to chatter, her hands shook, there was a tightness in her chest, her heart began

to beat with hard, dull pulsations, and at times seemed to stop beating, and she gasped for breath.

A terrible apprehension seized her, while the cold seemed to penetrate to her marrow. She never had felt such a sensation, she had never seemed to lose her hold on life like this before, never been so near her last breath.

"I am going to die," she thought, "I am dying——"

And filled with terror, she jumped out of bed, rang for Rosalie, waited, rang again, waited again, shivering and frozen.

The little maid did not come. She was doubtless asleep, that first, sound sleep that nothing can disturb. Jeanne, in despair, darted toward the stairs in her bare feet, and groping her way, she ascended the staircase quietly, found the door, opened it, and called, "Rosalie!" She went forward, stumbled against the bed, felt all over it with her hands and found that it was empty. It was empty and cold, and as if no one had slept there. Much surprised, she said: "What! Has she gone out in weather like this?"

But as her heart began to beat tumultuously till she seemed to be suffocating, she went downstairs again with trembling limbs in order to wake Julien. She rushed into his room filled with the idea that she was going to die, and longing to see him before she lost consciousness.

By the light of the dying embers she perceived Rosalie's head leaning on her husband's shoulder.

At the cry she gave they both started to their feet; she stood motionless for a second, horrified at this discovery, and then fled to her room; and when

Julien, at his wit's end, called "Jeanne!" she was seized with an overmastering terror of seeing him, of hearing his voice, of listening to him explaining, lying, of meeting his gaze; and she darted toward the stairs again and went down.

She now ran along in the darkness, at the risk of falling downstairs, at the risk of breaking her neck on the stone floor of the hall. She rushed along, impelled by an imperious desire to flee, to know nothing about it, to see no one.

When she was at the bottom of the stairs she sat down on one of the steps, still in her nightdress, and in bare feet, and remained in a dazed condition. She heard Julien moving and walking about. She started to her feet in order to escape him. He was starting to come downstairs and called: "Listen, Jeanne!"

No, she would not listen nor let him touch her with the tips of his fingers; and she darted into the dining-room as if she were fleeing from an assassin. She looked for a door of escape, a hiding place, a dark corner, some way of avoiding him. She hid under the table. But he was already at the door, a candle in his hand, still calling: "Jeanne!" She started off again like a hare, darted into the kitchen, ran round it twice like a trapped animal, and as he came near her, she suddenly opened the door into the garden and darted out into the night.

The contact with the snow, into which she occasionally sank up to her knees, seemed to give her the energy of despair. She did not feel cold, although she had little on. She felt nothing, her body was so numbed from the emotion of her mind, and she ran along as white as the snow.

She followed the large avenue, crossed the wood, crossed the ditch, and started off across the plain.

There was no moon, the stars were shining like sparks of fire in the black sky; but the plain was light with a dull whiteness, and lay in infinite silence.

Jeanne walked quickly, hardly breathing, not knowing, not thinking of anything. She suddenly stopped on the edge of the cliff. She stopped short, instinctively, and crouched down, bereft of thought and of will power.

In the abyss before her the silent, invisible sea exhaled the salt odor of its wrack at low tide.

She remained thus some time, her mind as inert as her body; then, all at once, she began to tremble, to tremble violently, like a sail shaken by the wind. Her arms, her hands, her feet, impelled by an invisible force, throbbed, pulsated wildly, and her consciousness awakened abruptly, sharp and poignant.

Old memories passed before her mental vision: the sail with him in Père Lastique's boat, their conversation, his nascent love, the christening of the boat; then she went back, further back, to that night of dreams when she first came to the "Poplars." And now! *And now!* Oh, her life was shipwrecked, all joy was ended, all expectation at an end; and the frightful future full of torture, of deception, and of despair appeared before her. Better to die, it would all be over at once.

But a voice cried in the distance: "Here it is, here are her steps; quick, quick, this way!" It was Julien who was looking for her.

Oh! she did not wish to see him again. In the abyss down yonder before her she now heard a slight sound, the indistinct ripple of the waves over

the rocks. She rose to her feet with the idea of throwing herself over the cliff and bidding life farewell. Like one in despair, she uttered the last word of the dying, the last word of the young soldier slain in battle: "Mother!"

All at once the thought of little mother came to her mind, she saw her sobbing, she saw her father on his knees before her mangled remains, and in a second she felt all the pain of their sorrow.

She sank down again into the snow; and when Julien and old Simon, followed by Marius, carrying a lantern, seized her arm to pull her back as she was so close to the brink, she made no attempt to escape.

She let them do as they would, for she could not stir. She felt that they were carrying her, and then that she was being put to bed and rubbed with hot cloths; then she became unconscious.

Then she had a nightmare, or was it a nightmare? She was in bed. It was broad daylight, but she could not get up. Why? She did not know. Then she heard a little noise on the floor, a sort of scratching, a rustling, and suddenly a mouse, a little gray mouse, ran quickly across the sheet. Another followed it, then a third, who ran toward her chest with his little, quick scamper. Jeanne was not afraid, and she reached out her hand to catch the animal, but could not catch it. Then other mice, ten, twenty, hundreds, thousands, rose up on all sides of her. They climbed the bedposts, ran up the tapestries, covered the bed completely. And soon they got beneath the covers; Jeanne felt them gliding over her skin, tickling her limbs, running up and down her body. She saw them running from the

bottom of the bed to get into her neck under the sheets; and she tried to fight them off, throwing her hands out to try and catch them, but always finding them empty.

She was frantic, wanted to escape, screamed, and it seemed as if she were being held down, as if strong arms enfolded her and rendered her helpless; but she saw no one.

She had no idea of time. It must have been long, a very long time.

Then she awoke, weary, aching, but quiet. She felt weak, very weak. She opened her eyes and was not surprised to see little mother seated in her room with a man whom she did not know.

How old was she? She did not know, and thought she was a very little girl. She had no recollection of anything.

The big man said: "Why, she has regained consciousness." Little mother began to weep. Then the big man resumed: "Come, be calm, baroness; I can ensure her recovery now. But do not talk to her at all. Let her sleep, let her sleep."

Then it seemed to Jeanne that she remained in a state of exhaustion for a long time, overcome by a heavy sleep as soon as she tried to think; and she tried not to remember anything whatever, as though she had a vague fear that the reality might come back to her.

Once when she awoke she saw Julien, alone, standing beside her; and suddenly it all came back to her, as if the curtain which hid her past life had been raised.

She felt a horrible pain in her heart, and wanted to escape once more. She threw back the coverlets,

UPB

jumped to the floor and fell down, her limbs being too weak to support her.

Julien sprang toward her, and she began to scream for him not to touch her. She writhed and rolled on the floor. The door opened. Aunt Lison came running in with Widow Dentu, then the baron, and finally little mother, puffing and distracted.

They put her back into bed, and she immediately closed her eyes, so as to escape talking and be able to think quietly.

Her mother and aunt watched over her anxiously, saying: "Do you hear us now, Jeanne, my little Jeanne?"

She pretended to be deaf, not to hear them, and did not answer. Night came on and the nurse took up her position beside the bed. She did not sleep; she kept trying to think of things that had escaped her memory as though there were holes in it, great white empty places where events had not been noted down.

Little by little she began to recall the facts, and she pondered over them steadily.

Little mother, Aunt Lison, the baron had come, so she must have been very ill. But Julien? What had he said? Did her parents know? And Rosalie, where was she? And what should she do? What should she do? An idea came to her—she would return to Rouen and live with father and little mother as in old days. She would be a widow; that's all.

Then she waited, listening to what was being said around her, understanding everything without letting them see it, rejoiced at her returning reason, patient and crafty.

That evening, at last, she found herself alone with the baroness and called to her in a low tone: "Little Mother!" Her own voice astonished her, it seemed strange. The baroness seized her hands: "My daughter, my darling Jeanne! My child, do you recognize me?"

"Yes, little mother, but you must not weep; we have a great deal to talk about. Did Julien tell you why I ran away in the snow?"

"Yes, my darling, you had a very dangerous fever."

"It was not that, mamma. I had the fever afterward; but did he tell you what gave me the fever and why I ran away?"

"No, my dearie."

"It was because I found Rosalie in his room."

Her mother thought she was delirious again and soothed her, saying: "Go to sleep, darling, calm yourself, try to sleep."

But Jeanne, persistent, continued: "I am quite sensible now, little mother. I am not talking wildly as I must have done these last days. I felt ill one night and I went to look for Julien. Rosalie was with him in his room. I did not know what I was doing, for sorrow, and I ran out into the snow to throw myself off the cliff."

But the baroness reiterated, "Yes, darling, you have been very ill, very ill."

"It is not that, mamma. I found Rosalie in with Julien, and I will not live with him any longer. You will take me back with you to Rouen to live as we used to do."

The baroness, whom the doctor had warned not

to thwart Jeanne in any way, replied: "Yes, my darling."

But the invalid grew impatient: "I see that you do not believe me. Go and fetch little father, he will soon understand."

The baroness left the room and presently returned, leaning on her husband's arm. They sat down beside the bed and Jeanne began to talk. She told them all, quietly, in a weak voice, but clearly; all about Julien's peculiar character, his harshness, his avarice, and, finally, his infidelity.

When she had finished, the baron saw that she was not delirious, but he did not know what to think, what to determine, or what to answer. He took her hand, tenderly, as he used to do when he put her to sleep with stories, and said: "Listen, dearie, we must act with prudence. We must do nothing rash. Try to put up with your husband until we can come to some decision—promise me this?"

"I will try, but I will not stay here after I get well," she replied.

Then she added in a lower tone: "Where is Rosalie now?"

"You will not see her any more," replied the baron. But she persisted: "Where is she? I wish to know." Then he confessed that she had not left the house, but declared that she was going to leave.

On leaving the room the baron, filled with indignation and wounded in his feelings as a father, went to look for Julien, and said to him abruptly: "Sir, I have come to ask you for an explanation of your conduct toward my daughter. You have been unfaithful to her with your maid, which is a double insult."

Julien pretended to be innocent, denied everything positively, swore, took God as his witness. What proof had they? he asked. Was not Jeanne delirious? Had she not had brain fever? Had she not run out in the snow, in an attack of delirium, at the very beginning of her illness? And it was just at this time, when she was running about the house almost naked, that she pretends that she saw her maid in her husband's room!

And he grew angry, threatened a lawsuit, became furious. The baron, bewildered, made excuses, begged his pardon, and held out his loyal hand to Julien, who refused to take it.

When Jeanne heard what her husband had said, she did not show any annoyance, but replied: "He is lying, papa, but we shall end by convicting him."

For some days she remained taciturn and reserved, thinking over matters. The third morning she asked to see Rosalie. The baron refused to send her up, saying she had left. Jeanne persisted, saying: "Well, let some one go and fetch her."

She was beginning to get excited when the doctor came. They told him everything, so that he could form an opinion. But Jeanne suddenly burst into tears, her nerves all unstrung, and almost screamed: "I want Rosalie; I wish to see her!"

The doctor took hold of her hand and said in a low tone: "Calm yourself, madame; any emotion may lead to serious consequences, for you are enceinte."

She was dumfounded, as though she had received a blow; and it seemed to her that she felt the first stirrings of life within her. Then she was silent, not even listening to what was being said, absorbed